

8.0 MITIGATION PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES

Existing mitigation activities include current mitigation programs and activities that are being implemented by County, State and Federal agencies within Teton County. Prioritization of Hazards and Mitigation Goals is in accordance with the stated objectives, specifically protection of Life, Property and Values at risk. The prioritized mitigation proposals are included in the Wildfire Mitigation Action Items Matrix (table 1) and explained in Section 7 Mitigation Strategy and Implementation section.

8.1 Local Programs

Teton County residents are served by a local fire district with three departments as well as by IDL, USFS and BLM. The Teton County Fire Commissioners and Fire District is an organization that promotes partnerships and information sharing among the various fire service providers in the County. This association meets on a regular basis to ensure coordination of resources. Priorities for Teton County departments are: training, communications, coordinated emergency services planning and response, personnel protective equipment, and apparatus.

Fire personnel throughout the county have taken the lead in providing many useful and educational services to Teton County residents, such as:

- School, church and civic group fire safety education presentations;
- Coordinating educational programs with other agencies;
- Participation in or sponsorship of local community events that focus on fire information and prevention.

8.2 County Codes

- Teton County Comprehensive Plan established road standards, conditions of design and construction. This document contains directions for review and updating of road standards to assure adequacy for long term needs of the County.
- Teton County Fire Protection Resolution for new subdivisions includes requirements for fire department access, water supply and wildfire evaluation.

8.3 State (IDL) Programs

- Provides education to property owners about fire hazards in wildland-urban interface areas.
- Manages the Hazardous Fuels Reduction Program to assist landowners or counties with grant funds for reduction of hazardous fuels.
- Manages Forest Stewardship program to assist landowners in forest and fire planning.
- Provides suppression training and resources as requested.
- Declares fire closures when wildfire danger ratings and conditions require.

8.4 Federal Programs

The role of the Federal land management agencies in Teton County is focused on reducing fuel hazards on the lands they administer. They also provide prevention and education programs, provide technical and financial assistance, and develop agreements and partnerships with other agencies and private stakeholders in an effort to provide for safer communities within the wildlands. Some of the programs provide grants to the Fire Districts within the County, which has enhanced the current operations, and will continue to do so within the foreseeable future.

Fire Suppression Assistance Grants may be provided to a State with an approved wildfire hazard mitigation plan. These grants are provided to protect life and improve property. The grant may include funds for training, equipment, supplies, and personnel.

8.5 National Wildland/Urban Interface Fire Protection Program

Federal agencies can use the National Wildland/Urban Interface Fire Protection Program to focus on wildland/urban interface fire protection issues and actions. The Western Governors' Association (WGA) can utilize this to involve State agencies, as well as local and private stakeholders.

8.6 Prescribed Burning/Mechanical Treatment

Within Teton County, the decline in the timber industry, coupled with historical fire exclusion has resulted in a backlog of fuel accumulation. As a result, new ignitions can move more quickly and intensely. Prescribed burning and/or mechanical treatment are the most efficient methods to mitigate these fuels.

8.7 Firewise

Firewise is a program developed within the National Wildland/Urban Interface Fire Protection Program. It is administered through the National Wildfire Coordinating Group, with the intention of educating planners and decision makers at the local level. Firewise offers online wildfire protection information and checklists, as well as listings of other publications, videos, and conferences.